THE BUMBLE BEE

Vol. 1, No. 11

SEPTEMBER, 1945

Columbia River Packers Association, Inc., Astoria, Oregon

EDITORIAL

Post War

Hundreds of thousands of American workers in many industries have suffered a sudden and complete stoppage of income. Those who had the common sense to foresee the changes, inevitable with the cessation of the war, and who had the moral stamina to save a fair portion of their wartime earnings, have the time to look around and consider the situation without alarm. Those who dissipated their increased incomes in black markets or in an attempt to immediately jump their standards of living to the limit of wartime earnings, must turn to unemployment insurance and relief. In many cases, the job losses are temporary and work will return when their employers have had a period to reconvert to peace time production. In other cases, where a job was entirely a war inspired work with no peace time history, the worker must turn to other fields of endeavor.

Many are planning to return to localities and to jobs they held during peace times. Others with a taste of better living conditions are trying to find new jobs at the site of their wartime endeavors. In most cases the jobs that have been lost have been the high paid work in the shipyards, airplane plants, and munition factories. In many areas where these plants have closed there are other jobs available but in taking them the worker must accept a loss of income, for they are regular peace time jobs in which the employer must meet competition, and where the government does not finance or protect his business.

A situation has been created whereby we have thousands of people out of work and thousands of jobs open for them—but the jobs are staying open and the unemployed are still unemployed. The wave of resentment at their loss of war inflated incomes is being expressed in a series of strikes. In many cases the demands are for base rate pay scales still higher than the already high wartime rates, with the strikers evidently aiming for base rates which will enable them to earn their wartime incomes for far less hours of work. If employers accept these demands, they must increase the price of their products. The worker will get more money in his pay envelope, will pay more taxes and, at the increased cost of the products he must buy, will be able to purchase less than before. The worker will not be any better off and the spiral of inflation which threatens the value of the currency with which he is paid will take another surge upward.

War brought death, wounds, and suffering to many in armed forces. To the civilian worker it brought steady jobs, more pay, and a generally better standard of living, despite rationing restrictions. The situation is full of danger and unless it is met in a spirit of sober reasoning coupled with a seasoning of common sense, we may have just as hard a fight to retain the very things for which we went to war with Germany and Japan.

No Reconversion

The people employed in the fishing industry in this area do not have these problems. They finished the war with their jobs continuing. There are more jobs, steadier jobs, and better paid jobs, than there were before the war started and there is every prospect that these conditions will continue. They have been offered, after the war, a contract with higher wage scales than they enjoyed during the war and are only asked to observe reasonable production standards.

They must realize that in the near future the fishery processor must send his products through markets which will become highly competitive with other foods; foods which have been strictly rationed throughout the war but which will soon be available in large quantities. They must realize that in addition to the factor of "what we want" there is an absolute controlling factor of "what industry can pay and still make a profit." Without a profit there is no business, no jobs.

We look forward to a common sense settlement of wage problems in this area, and postwar prosperity rather than depression.

Bob Vollmer

Fifteen years with CRPA he has charge of recording the thousands of items which annually go through CRPA's accounts with its fishermen.

THE BUMBLE BEE

Published periodically by the Columbia River Packers Association, Inc., Astoria, Oregon, for employees and fishermen.

Editor.....JAMES H. CELLARS

ASTORIA REPORTERS

Office.....Louise Carlson
Elmore Tuna.....Marjorie Christensen
Elmore Salmon.....P. J. Burke, Sn.
Cold Storage.....Jo Schwab
Shipyards.....Lura Skyles
Boatyard and Launches.....Johan Peterson
Scandinavian.....John North
Geo. & Barker.....Peter Welch
Occident.....Albert Paldanius
Alaska Office.....Herman Geissel
Machine Shop.....Tom Wooton

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Cushman.....George Ready
Waldport.....Jack Marincovich
Newport.....Velda Uffelman
Depoe Bay.....Lois Edwards
Wheeler.....George Radich
Eagle Cliff.....George Johnson
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St. Helens.....Oscar Gerard
Clifton.....Jalmar Thompson
Altoona.....Laura Hendrickson
North Shore.....Frank Pfleger
Ilwaco.....Wayne Suomela
Westport, Wn......Gene Matthews
Bay Center.....Carl Rozine

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER...Ned Thorndike

STORMS SLASH 1945 ALBACORE PRODUCTION

Continual winds hamper fishermen; Salmon pack less

Continued bad weather during the entire tuna fishing season and which was more in evidence as the period reached its usual peak in late August and early September seriously affected tuna deliveries all along the north Pacific coast and as September closed it was estimated that the total pack would not be much more than 40 per cent of the banner pack of 1944.

Despite the fact that more boats were engaged in the fishery than ever before, that equipment was generally better, and that large schools of tuna were sighted from time to time the returns were very poor. Wind squalls occurred at such close intervals that the fisherman driven into port by one would hardly have time to make bait and get started on another trip before he was again compelled to get back into port. The continued Northwest winds affected the water temperatures which were generally colder than in previous years and not at all to the liking of the albacore. Catches made in September were from the southern areas off the coast.

By the latter part of the month boats which usually continue in the fishery until about October 10 had removed their bait tanks and started for other ports or were loading their trawling gear for operations on the banks.

Salmon Production Less

A review of the salmon pack to date indicated that the total would be slightly less than last year. Good catches were made on the Columbia River in the latter part of August. A good start was made with the opening of the fall season on September 10, but the production dropped rapidly after the first two days, steadied, and then dropped sharply again the last week of the month.

Ocean troll production of salmon was affected by the same weather conditions which hit the tuna fleet. For the possible fishing time returns were fair but the total production will be below that of last year. Ocean silverside production was noticeably short.

Trawl Production

Trawl fish production, practically quiescent during the tuna season when all draggers were out after albacore, showed signs of life during the latter part of the month. With a number of the draggers now re-equipped for their regular trade this type of production is expected to pick up again, weather permitting.

RACKING DRESSED SALMON

Salmon being prepared at CRPA Cold Storage for a trip to the sharp freezers.

BIG BROKER

Left is W. T. Morey, Stone-Hall Co., Denver, with Fred Sandoz, CRPA Sales Manager. Morey's hat is normally about 6 feet 5 inches from the floor. Sandoz in search of comparative altitude is standing on a keg.

ALTOONA NOTES

Fall season opened with good catches for the Altoona fishermen.

Two Altoona Cannery workers Misses Cora Holland and Bonnie Enge were burned severely while making candy at their apartment. We all wish them a speedy recovery.

Gunnar Hermason a veteran Columbia River fishermen is home on a 30-day leave, he has been in the South Pacific for the past year.

VETERAN FISHERMAN

John Wahl

This veteran Columbia River gillnet fisherman has sold his catches to CRPA for 44 years. He has gone through the era of sail and oars up through the age of power boats and mechanical net pullers. He still catches enough fish for a comfortable living and expects to be out again in 1946. He has spent thousands of nights on the wide Columbia estuary and knows the moods and currents of the river by heart.

CRPA opens its new "Sky Room" for employees

CRPA introduced an innovation in the Astoria area fishing business in September when it opened a fine cafeteria type restaurant for its employees in Elmore Cannery. Located on the third floor of the cannery building it is lighted by solid rows of windows on three sides and was promptly dubbed the "Sky Room," by the cannery workers.

Wholesome hot lunch dishes and pastry prepared by Mrs. Edith Parker, well known Astoria caterer, are served at cost. The cafeteria can serve 165 people at one sitting and can handle over 300 people during the noon lunch hour. Studies are being made by the company to determine if a practical method can be devised to provide cold storage plant employees with hot lunches from the Elmore Cafeteria.

The place is modernly equipped throughout and under Mrs. Parker's direction every effort is being made to serve the best possible food obtainable in surroundings that are clean, sanitary in every detail, and pleasant.

Employees from the main office and other plants are joining the Elmore crews at noon and comment to date indicated that the "Sky Room" is going to be a big success.

TUNA BAIT SEINING

Dipping anchovies from the bait seine of the Thelma II. Live bait is stored in tank immediately back of the dipper and is later used to attract tuna to the side of the boat.

NEW ELMORE CANNERY CAFETERIA

Above: Cafeteria dining room with a seating capacity for 165 and plenty of elbow room. Below: The service counter ready for business.

VISITORS

Elwood C. Boobar, San Francisco, broker.

Captain and Mrs. Norman Weitkamp, Quartermaster Market Center buyer, Seattle.

J. I. McGovern, John J. Maloney & Co., our Chicago broker.

R. Covington, Parrot & Co., Los Angeles.

Nelson Reeves, buyer for Wm. Edwards Co., Cleveland.

Louis Vitale, Los Angeles.

A. Bowman, Kelly Clark, Portland.

Fred Frink, buyer, Safeway, Portland.

Chas. Hansen, Brighton Fish Co., Bellingham.

Fred Grossman, Merchants Grocery Co., Cleveland, Ohio.

Sam Parker, Northwest Grocery Co., Portland.

Chas. Welker, West Coast Grocery Co., Tacoma, Washington.

SEINE FISHING HISTORICAL ON THE COLUMBIA

White fishermen follow methods of Indian tribes

Haul or drag seining is one of the oldest and certainly the most picturesque type of salmon fishing carried on in the Columbia River. It is one type of fishery known to have been carried on in the Indian fishery, through the intermediate fishery when the white men first began fishing operations, and up until the present day.

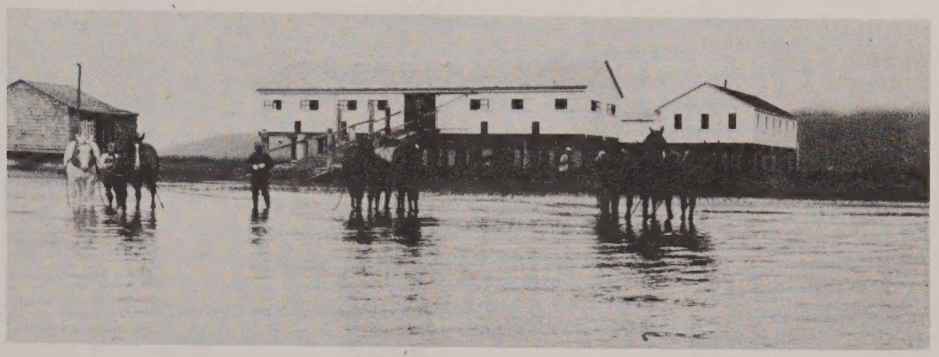
The Indians with skill and patience constructed nets some 300 feet long out of spruce roots, the inner bark of the white cedar, or a grass known as silk grass, for which they bartered with the mountain tribes. The operation was just the same as that carried on today. One end of the net was held on shore and the other end carried out in the current by canoes, and when fully extended, brought back to shore in a circular sweep. Both ends were then hauled in and the fish caught in the sweep brought to shore. The white man's seine of today is weighted at the bottom with a lead line and floated at the top with cedar floats to keep the net in a perpendicular position. The Indians weighted their seines with flat stones with a hole bored in the center, and floated them with bits of dried cedar.

The white man has extended the length of the seines. He hauls them out with launches and the nets are dragged ashore by teams of horses, generally with two teams operating on the shore or tail line and five teams on the offshore or head end.

The modern seine is about 300 to 350 fathoms in length as compared with 250 fathoms for drift nets. Stories have been circulated of the operation of "mile long" seines sweeping the entire width of the river. These are entirely untrue, the actual lengths being as above, and furthermore in actual operation the seine sweep is seldom if ever more than three quarters of its actual length, as there is always a big bow or half circle as the head end moves out from shore.

The height of seining activities on the river was reached in the late 20's. Since that time river improvement work for channel purposes has eliminated many of the sites available. In addition, in 1935, the State of Washington barred operation of drag seines on the Columbia River although not in other waters of the state. At their height when there were 57 drag seines operating this gear took only 16 per cent of the total catch on the Columbia. For the past five years the number of operating drag seines has varied from six to eight with their catch percentage down to less than 10 per cent.

COLUMBIA RIVER SEINING



Above: Barn and crew house at CRPA's Kaboth seine ground. Below: Bringing in the head line. Other seine operation pictures on cover page.

Sites are Pictorial

Seining operations attract the attention of visitors to this area more than any other fishing operation. Sites are usually on sand bars in the river estuary. Barns for the teams and houses for the crews rise on pilings above the sands or marshes and the buildings are surrounded by deep water at high tide.

Teams and men work in water from two to three feet deep and the sight of teams of horses being driven around in the middle of a river, two to four miles wide, generally draw exclamations of astonishment from visitors. The teams take to the work with considerable enjoyment. They are given the best of care and after a season or two experience know the job just about as well as their driver. Many of the teams operate for year after year in this business and show no ill effects from the daily immersion. Most of them do no other work and aside from their four months or so at the seining sites are turned out to pasture for the balance of the year.

Catch Valuable

While the production of the seines is not large as compared with the total take of fish from the river, the fish so caught have an additional value. They do not gill themselves in the seine and are not net marked or scarred and can be sold in frozen or mild cured form, bringing a higher return than any other fish. Seine fishing also has a conservation value in that any small fish caught, come in alive, and can be and are thrown out of the net unharmed. Fish caught by gillnet are drowned and generally dead when hauled in.

Seine crews consist of from 24 to 35 men, according to the scope of the operation. These men are highly paid and in addition receive their board and room while working. Prior to the war many of the seine fishermen were young college men who sought this healthful, well paid work, which was carried on at such a time that it afforded them an opportunity to earn money during vacation with which to continue their college careers and it is expected that this condition will again exist now that the war is over. Many well known Oregon business and professional men have been able to continue and complete their college courses with funds derived from these jobs.

Fishery interests oppose The Dalles dam construction

Fishing interests of the Columbia Basin area, both commercial and recreational, joined forces on September 22, to appear before the U. S. Engineers, at The Dalles, Oregon, to voice their opposition to a proposal to construct a dam across the Columbia River near that city. The joint appearance was made under the auspices of the Columbia Basin Fisheries Development Association. State Senator M. R. Chessman, Astoria, was spokesman for this group which was represented by a committee composed of Chessman, chairman of the Association, T. F. Sandoz, Astoria, secretary-treasurer; Antone Sorensen, and James H. Cellars. A comprehensive statement of the fisheries position was presented in the form of a written brief.

This statement developed factual data to indicate that the construction of this dam or other such proposed structures in the Columbia Basin could not be justified on the grounds of any need in the foreseeable future for power production facilities or reclamation activities. It further indicated such construction for navigation purposes could not be justified in any practical manner.

Navigation Stressed

Proponents of the structure stressed benefits from lower freight rates that might accrue to inland Columbia basin producers from the construction of this and other dams, but did not even attempt to justify the cost to the taxpayers of this vast development.

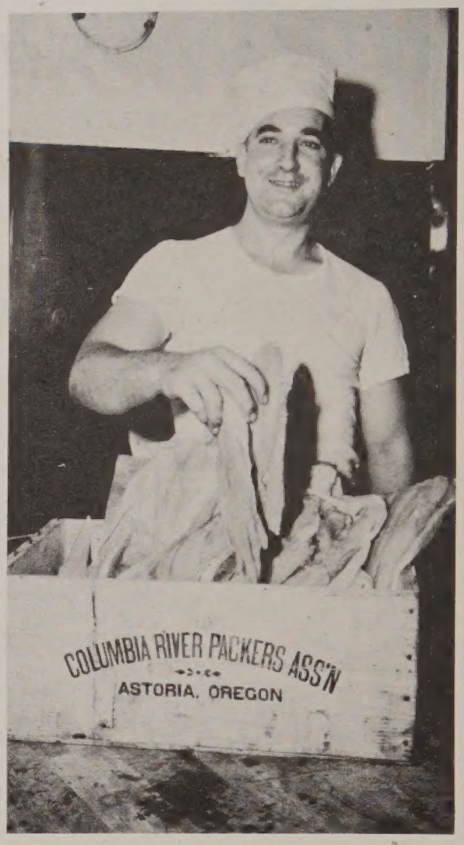
Others speaking against the proposal included: Francis Seufert, president of The Dalles Chamber of Commerce, speaking for the Mid-Columbia Fisheries Association; Arne J. Suomela, Oregon Fish Commission; Joe Craig, Washington Department of Fisheries; William Puustinen, Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union; and R. C. Simmons, attorney for the U. S. Indian Bureau and a number of tribal representatives.

Representatives of the Portland Chamber of Commerce and of the Hood River Chamber of Commerce, who spoke in favor of the dam construction, both qualified their approval with a demand that any construction make ample provision for preservation of the salmon runs on the Columbia River.

SHIPS LOG

The sympathy of all is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Tom Fitcha for the death of their son Harold who lost his life in an accident.

ASTORIA TO ASTORIA



Above you see a box of CRPA trawl fish frozen fillets being opened on board the U.S.S. Cruiser Astoria, in the South Pacific. This is a 10,000 ton light cruiser, the second to be named after this city. The first Astoria was lost at Guadalcanal in the fall of 1942.

Edwin N. Carlsen, seaman first class, and a striker for a butcher rating is handling the fish. Carlsen is from Absecon, N. J., but he noted the coincidence of handling a box of fish processed at Astoria, Oregon, on board a cruiser named after that city.

Practically all of CRPA's frozen fish production during the past three years has gone to the armed forces.

CRPA plans normal Alaska operations for coming season

Of interest to our Alaska employees and fishermen will be the decision of CRPA to operate both its Naknek and Nushagak plants on Bristol Bay, Alaska, during the 1946 season. The company believes that shipping and manpower conditions will be such, shortly after the turn of the year, that the program of consolidated operation carried on during war years can be dropped and normal operations resumed.

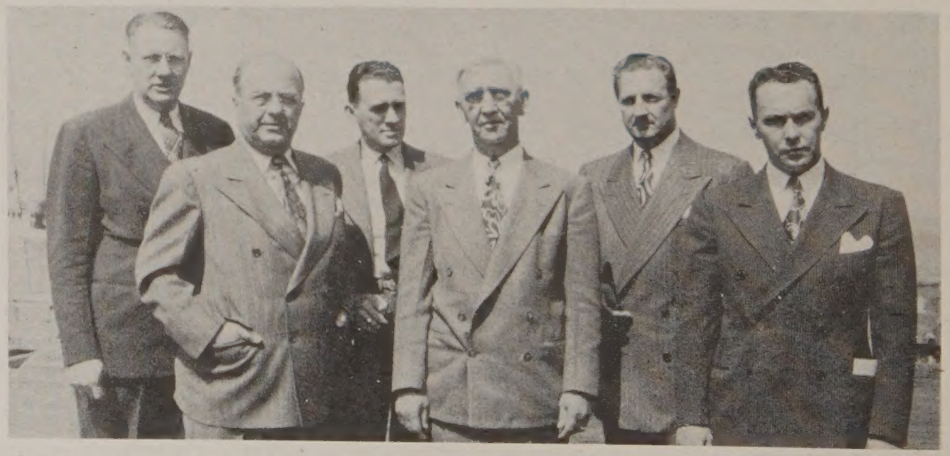
Nushagak Superintendent John Head and a crew of carpenters and machinists spent several months this year preparing the cannery, which has not been operated since 1940, for the 1946 season. An extensive program of repair is still necessary before the buildings and equipment are ready to go, and a group of repairmen will go up early in 1946 to have the cannery ready for the season opening.

Structural materials for these repairs are already being assembled. The new motor vessel Swiftwater, due to be launched at CRPA yards next month, will tow the two 72 foot barges, the Thor and the Golden Age, north for use at Nushagak and other floating equipment there will be readied for usage.

Ducks Beware

With the bird shooting season near opening time, shotguns, shells, sleeping bags, duck skiffs, and decoys, are among the main topics of conversation, in off-time hours around the CRPA office. If all plans are carried out the duck and pheasant population is due for a thinning out.

THE BAGLEY BOYS



Astoria visitors during the past month to inspect CRPA operations were representative of Bagley Co., Salt Lake City. Pictured above William Palmberg, assistant sales manager CRPA; Ross Bagley, head of the brokerage concern; Fred Sandoz, CRPA sales manager; Bill Hadley, Ken Kammerman, and Bob Breckbill.

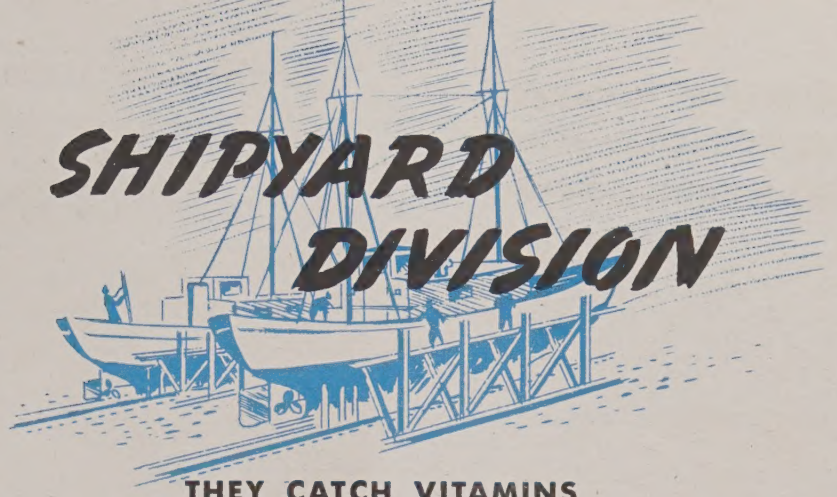
New trawlers to be launched soon; barge underway

CRPA shipyard repair work kept up such a busy gait during the past month that little work could be done on the two new trawlers the Kiska and Swiftwater. However, Superintendent William Wootton is now predicting that the new boats will go into the water on or shortly after October 7, when tidal conditions will be good.

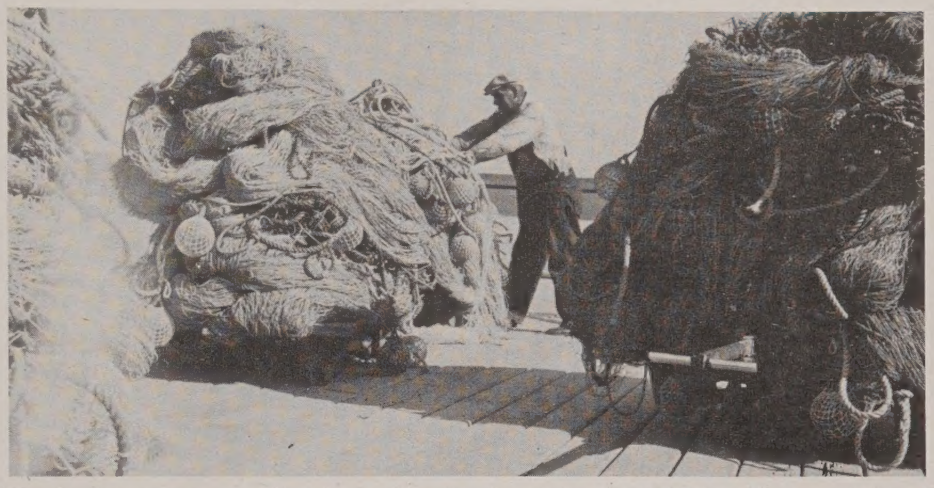
Twenty-four fishing craft were hauled up on the ways for major or minor repairs during the month.

Molds have been completed for a big barge 80 feet by 24 by 6, which will be constructed for the Alaska fishery of Libby, McNeill, & Libby. The barge will be powered by two 150 h.p. Cummings diesels, and will be specially designed for the work it is to do. Considerable work for CRPA's Alaska operations is also scheduled for the winter program.

Evidence that the principal fishing activities for the year are over is given by the fact that during the last days of the months 30 boats were in for tuna bait tank removal and four craft were hauled up for winter storage.



THEY CATCH VITAMINS



Big shark nets being readied for loading for the winter shark fishing. Many varieties of shark are sought for the valuable vitamin oils found in their livers. The soupfin shark is the most prized as its liver, 10 per cent of its body weight, has the most vitamins. This fishery will be well underway by the middle of October.

THERE IS ALWAYS A BETTER WAY

(In each issue of the Bumble Bee hereafter there will be a list of suggestion awards. All awards granted to date will be published as soon as space permits.)

Ed Lund, $5.00. Installation of protectors around lights in storage rooms at Cold Storage.

Cecil Rowley, $5.00. Installation of an alarm system for sharp freezer rooms at Newport.

Miss Mary Sandoz, $5.00. Cards for turning off lights when not in use.

Lambert W. Olp, $5.00. Box for ice-crusher Elmore Cannery.

Dave Rowe, $5.00. Device for dressing fillets in pans prior to freezing.

Henry J. Mackay, $5.00. Protection on the end of the tuna gluing machinery chute.

Lillian Robinson, $5.00. Arrangement of liver picking pans and better type stick for handling of fish.

Miss Jo Schwab, $25.00. Installation of an equipment room.

Millie J. Sagen, $5.00. Stretcher for Cold Storage employees.

Helen Angberg, $5.00. Switch to control operation of washers.

James N. Bakkensen, $5.00. Cover over one end of hoist rail at Westport.

Valda A. Coon, $5.00. Plan for making gloves, aprons, etc., available to employees without delay.

Millia J. Sagen, $5.00. Installation of sanitary sink near pan sterilizer in the Cold Storage.

A. N. Thorndike, $5.00. Metal sheathing around lower portion of posts in labeling warehouse.

Mary E. Martin, $5.00. Protection of wheel on box making machines.

Lena C. Mahala, $5.00. Covering steam pipes near liver picking tables.

P. J. Burk, Sr., $5.00. Segregation of various varieties of fish.

P. J. Burk, Jr., $5.00. Requisitions for purchases in duplicate.

George Moore, $5.00. Installation of hoist near the scale at Cold Storage.

Wm. A. Christensen, $5.00. Piping water under dock.

C. Thompson, $5.00. Work on light weight hydraulic trucks making them suitable for certain types of work.

Millie J. Sagen, $5.00. Flag pole at Cold Storage.

Carl Utzinger, $5.00. Stamping of salmon cans for government lots.

Lloyd F. Martin, $20.00. Liver picking knife.

M. L. Korsgaard, $5.00. Installation of bell downstairs at Elmore Tuna Cannery when a line goes for coffee.

BOWLING TEAM

Watch for an announcement of a CRPA feminine bowling team that plans to toss a few bursting atoms among the pins of Astoria alleys this winter. They will be known as either the Bumble Bee Boosters or the Bumble Bee Buzz Bombs, and the team members, according to advance dope, can really make wood fly. Sales Manager Fred Sandoz, who has taken the project under his wing, is doping out a snappy jacket that will inspire strikes and spares and eliminate splits.

BAIT EATER CAUGHT

Porpoise caught in bait seine of the boat Brookfield.

Market Letter

Normal buying trends are due to return soon

Buying habits among consumers, retailers and distributors will change as known brands reappear in volume. For the past several years many strange and unknown brands have made their appearance on the shelves of both wholesale and retail concerns. These brands have sold with fair acceptance due to a stimulated purchasing power, and also the fact that normal quantities of known brand merchandise was not available. This situation is due to change. Buying will be on a more selective basis with preference being given to quality products as they again become available.

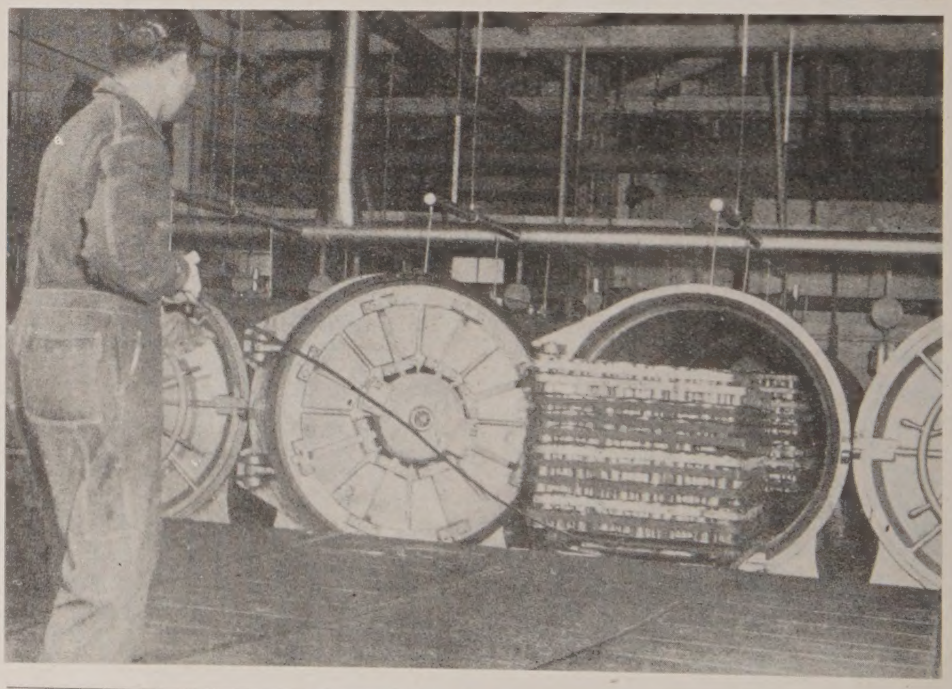
Before the war we experienced a very stable and increasing consumer demand for our well-known *Bumble Bee* Brands of fancy seafoods. We have regretted not being in a position to supply our trade with even a normal volume of these products. Now on our *Bumble Bee* brands of tuna, salmon and crabmeat, as well as added lines of varied frozen items, we are experiencing a demand out of all proportion to our ability to supply. With higher per capita purchasing power, we anticipate consistent demand for better quality seafoods. We ask that our trade be patient with us as we are making a conscientious effort to distribute our product on an equitable basis.

Less Albacore for '45 markets; Production low

In the light of our experience to date, our present estimate of the final pack of Northwest albacore tuna will not exceed 40 per cent of last season. Normally, the Northwest albacore tuna fishing season is over by the middle of October. We have experienced a long period of stormy weather conditions which have presented the large bait-type tuna clippers from operating off shore. A considerable number of these boats are now leaving this area to devote their activities to other types of fishing while those remaining on the river are converting their gear in anticipation of trawl fishing.

We have made an equitable distribution of our pack this year. Some markets this season will receive considerably less due to the fact that the allocation of our pack in the war years has been based on our experience of the years 1940-41. Our total production this year will not exceed an average year's pack, while 1944 was double the average of any previous year. Therefore, it is not practical for us to attempt to allocate any product to the trade who did not have a 1940-41 purchase experience with us.

TUNA COOKING



Above: Hauling out pre-cooked albacore tuna from retorts. The tuna is pre-cooked for 4 hours at 220 degrees. Below: Canned tuna after final cooking. Pre-cooked tuna is canned and then after the cans are sealed it is cooked again for 70 minutes at high temperatures.